

REMARKS

Claims 4, 15, 28, 29, and 30-54 remain in this application. Claims 1-3, 5-14, and 16-27 have been cancelled without prejudice to their subsequent reinstatement. Claims 4, 15, and 28 have been amended. Claims 30-54 have been added as dependent claims that each depend from one of claims 4, 15, and 28. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Specification

The Examiner has objected to specification for failing to provide a proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Paragraph [0037] of the specification has been amended based on claims 28 and 29. Therefore the objection is believed to be moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the search and for finding allowable subject matter. The Examiner has indicated that claims 4, 15, 28, and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 4, 15, and 28 have been amended in this manner and are believed to be allowable. Claim 29 is believed to be allowable at least for its dependence on claim 28. Additionally, new claims 30-54 each depend from one of claims 4, 15, and 28 and are also believed to be allowable for at least this reason.

35 U.S.C. §102(b) Rejection – Asakawa et al.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 5-8, 10-14, 16-23, 25-27 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,280,897 issued to Asakawa et

al. Without admitting the appropriateness of the rejection, these claims have been cancelled, and therefore the rejection is believed to be moot.

35 U.S.C. §102(b) Rejection – Douki et al.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 5-8, 10-14, 16-23, 25-27 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by European Application EP 1 085 379 issued to Douki et al. Without admitting the appropriateness of the rejection, these claims have been cancelled, and therefore the rejection is believed to be moot.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejection - Douki et al.

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 9 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over European Application EP 1 085 379 issued to Douki. Without admitting the appropriateness of the rejection, these claims have been cancelled, and therefore the rejection is believed to be moot.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims be allowed at the earliest possible date.

Request For Telephone Interview

The Examiner is invited to call Brent E. Vecchia at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Request For An Extension Of Time

The Applicants respectfully petition for an extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) should one be necessary. Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 to cover the necessary fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 for such an extension.

Charge Our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: 4-11-05

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